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XENOPHON'S ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE *HISTORY* OF HERODOTUS

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The question of Xenophon's acquaintance with the *History* of Herodotus is still unsettled. It is reasonable to assume such acquaintance, although the fact that he nowhere mentions or alludes to his predecessor may seem hard to explain. It is undisputed that the work of Herodotus was familiar to the Athenians before 401 B.C.; also that Xenophon lived in Athens up to that time. It is the purpose of this paper to show, by a comparison of passages from the two authors, that Xenophon had read Herodotus and had been influenced by him.

Of the capture of Sardis by Cyrus there are various traditions: that of Ctesias (*Persic.* § 4); of Polyænus (vii. 6. 2); of Bacchylides (iii. 23 ff.); of Herodotus (i. 80 ff.). A glance at Xenophon's account (*Cyrop.* vii. 2) is enough to show that he is following the one given by Herodotus, for not only are they similar in their main features, but they agree in almost every detail. The few points in which they differ can almost all be accounted for by the fact that the *Cyropaedia* is not so much history as eulogy. Two examples of these differences will suffice: Xenophon makes Cyrus accomplish in one battle what according to Herodotus he did in two; Xenophon says that Croesus *fled* to Sardis after the battle, whereas Herodotus has him march back after deliberating whether he should do so or not. But it is our task to show that Xenophon knew not only the same tradition, but that he was familiar with the words of Herodotus.

Turning now to the language of the accounts, we read in Herodotus (i. 80) that Cyrus, in fear of the cavalry of Croesus, acted as follows: ὅσαι τῷ στρατῷ τῷ ἑωυτοῦ εἶποντο σιτοφόροι τε καὶ σκευοφόροι κάμηλοι, ταύτας πάσας ἀλίσσας καὶ ἀπελὼν τὰ ἄχθεια ἄνδρας ἐπ' αὐτὰς ἀνέβησε ἱππάδα στολὴν ἐνεσταλμένους. . . . Now although Xenophon has mentioned the camel force of Cyrus

several times before (*Cyrop.* vi. 2. 8; 3. 33; vii. 1. 22; 27), he has said not a word to the effect that the camels had formerly been used as baggage animals, nor that they were being used for any but their regular work; and yet, in closing his account of the battle, he abruptly tells us that the camels οὕτω δὲ ἀπολαβοῦσαι πάλιν τὸ ἐαυτῶν σχῆμα ἐν τοῖς σκευοφόροις διάγουσι (vii. 1. 49). It is not improbable that, having Herodotus' account before him, in which the statement of the change in the use of the camels is so prominent, Xenophon failed to observe that he himself had said nothing about it.

On the morning after the capture of the city, Xenophon says Cyrus entered the city and commanded that no one should leave his post, ὁ δὲ Κροῖσος κατακλεισάμενος ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις Κῦρον ἐβόα (vii. 2. 5). This conduct of Croesus is strange. Why should he keep calling out for Cyrus? What reason had he to expect mercy from Cyrus? Is not Cyrus' command to take Croesus alive, as given by Herodotus, lurking in Xenophon's mind? And is not the impressive sentence of Herodotus (i. 86) [Croesus] ἀνευεϊκάμενόν τε καὶ ἀναστενάζοντα ἐκ πολλῆς ἡσυχίας ἐς τρεῖς ὀνομάσαι 'Σόλων' responsible for Xenophon's unexpected Κῦρον ἐβόα?

With Herodotus (i. 89), ἐπεῖτε με θεοὶ ἔδωκαν δοῦλόν σοι and (i. 87) ἀλλὰ ταῦτα δαίμοσί μου φίλον ἦν οὕτω γενέσθαι, compare Xenophon (*Cyrop.* vii. 2. 9), χαῖρε, ὦ δέσποτα [Croesus], ἔφη· τοῦτο γὰρ ἡ τύχη καὶ ἔχειν τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦδε δίδωσι σοὶ καὶ ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύειν. Xenophon makes Cyrus respond to this: καὶ σύ γε, ἔφη, ὦ Κροῖσε, ἐπείπερ ἄνθρωποί γέ ἐσμεν ἀμφοτέροι (§ 10). One wonders what there is in the words of Croesus to call forth this response of Cyrus. The connection is loose, the causal clause abrupt, and the whole sentence bald. But turning to Herodotus (i. 86) we read that when Cyrus learned the meaning of Croesus' calls for Solon, and saw the misery of the man who so recently had been the happiest of mortals, he μεταγόνοντα τε καὶ ἐννώσαντα ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐὼν ἄλλον ἄνθρωπον, γενόμενον ἐωυτοῦ εὐδαιμονίῃ οὐκ ἐλάσσω, ζῶντα πυρὶ διδοίη. . . . And now we see how Xenophon came to use his abrupt statement, which becomes full of meaning from the story of Herodotus. Compare also with

these words of Herodotus what Xenophon says in § 26: ἐγὼ γὰρ σου ἐννοῶν τὴν πρόσθεν εὐδαιμονίαν οἰκτείρω τέ σε. . . .

Immediately after the above greeting, Cyrus, according to Xenophon, proceeds to ask Croesus for advice: ἄρ' ἂν τί μοι ἐθέλῃσαι συμβουλευῆσαι; This is a singular thing for Cyrus to do, for he and Croesus are as yet strangers, and Croesus has done nothing to win such respect from Cyrus as this request implies. But in Herod. i. 88, when Croesus asks politely: ὦ βασιλεῦ, κότερον λέγειν πρὸς σέ τὰ νοέων τυγχάνω ἢ σιγᾶν ἐν τῷ παρόντι χρή; it is not strange that Cyrus should accept the proffered advice, because of the deep impression made upon him by the miraculous escape from the pyre.

In § 20, Xenophon says of the dumb son of Croesus: ὁ μὲν γὰρ κωφὸς ὦν διετέλει. But why διετέλει? Possibly to enter his quiet protest against the marvel-teller whose account he has before him, an account which says that this dumb son miraculously received the gift of speech when he saw his father about to be put to death by a Persian soldier (Herod i. 85).

Very similar to the foregoing instance is Xenophon's method of dealing with the contest between Leotychides and Agesilaus for the Spartan throne after the death of Agis. He says (*Hell.* iii. 3, 1): ἐπεὶ . . . ἔδει βασιλέα καθίστασθαι, ἀντέλεγον περὶ βασιλείας Λεωτυχίδης, υἱὸς φάσκων Ἀγιδος εἶναι, Ἀγησίλαος δὲ ἀδελφός. The use of φάσκων is a little strange, for it implies some previous debate of the matter, of which no hint is given before or after this passage. When Leotychides says that by law the son, and not the brother, succeeds to the throne, Agesilaus answers: ἐμὲ ἂν δέοι βασιλεύειν. Leotychides asks, in surprise, how that may be, when he, the son, is alive, and receives the answer: ὅτι ὦν τὸ καλεῖς πατέρα, οὐκ ἔφη σε εἶναι ἑαυτοῦ. Apparently this is the first word that Leotychides has heard to the effect that he is not the son of the king; it is therefore strange that Xenophon should say no more about the matter. But stranger still, in spite of the surprise of Leotychides at the news, he seems, according to Xenophon, to have made inquiries of his mother, for he says: Ἀλλ' ἡ πολὺ κάλλιον ἐκείνου εἰδυνία μήτηρ καὶ νῦν ἔτι φησίν. In fact, this statement makes the whole story somewhat suspicious, and suggests dependence on another and more complete tale.

Turning to Herod. vi. 61 ff., we find the story of the contest between Demaratus and Leotychides for the throne left vacant by the death of Ariston, king of Sparta. Herodotus tells the story of Ariston's third marriage. Upon receiving news of the birth of a son some months later, Ariston, after counting the months on his fingers, ἀπώμοσε, φᾶς οὐκ ἔωτοῦ μιν εἶναι (vi. 65). It is probably this passage which called forth Xenophon's abrupt statement: οὐκ ἔφη σε εἶναι ἑαυτοῦ. Herodotus says that, as a result, Demaratus, who had been made king, was deposed by the combined efforts of Cleomenes and Leotychides, and that the latter became king in his stead. Later, Demaratus, because of an insult offered him by Leotychides, determined to find out the truth from his mother, who, under oath, declared that he was the son of Ariston or of the hero Astrobacus. And here again we may see Xenophon's discrepancy when he represents Leotychides as surprised by the assertion that he is not the king's son, although according to Xenophon's own words Leotychides had previously questioned his mother about the matter.

In i. 65 Herodotus tells how Lycurgus was greeted by the oracle at Delphi upon his entrance into the temple: ὡς ἐσήμε ἐς τὸ μέγαρον, . . . ἡ Πυθίη λέγει . . . Δίξω ἢ σε θεὸν μαντεύσομαι ἢ ἄνθρωπον. In the *Apology* of Socrates (regarded as genuine by Christ and Dindorf) Xenophon mentions (§ 15) the same incident in the words: λέγεται γὰρ εἰς τὸν ναὸν εἰσιόντα προσεπεῖν αὐτόν (the god to Lycurgus), φροντίζω πότερα θεὸν σε εἶπω ἢ ἄνθρωπον. This is the nearest approach to quotation from Herodotus that we find in Xenophon. It is practically a quotation, for the changes are evidently due to Xenophon's desire to substitute familiar Attic words for the unusual ones of Herodotus. Thus for δῖξω we find the common φροντίζω; for μαντεύσομαι, εἶπω; for ἡ . . . ἡ, πότερα . . . ἢ. Moreover, Xenophon's λέγεται indicates that he is not quoting an oracle directly, but at second hand; so too does the fact that Xenophon's is not a hexameter verse, as is that of Herodotus and as are all direct oracles. It is possible too that Xenophon's evident desire to conceal his dependence on Herodotus may be partly responsible for these changes.

Xenophon represents Cyrus, on his death-bed, recounting his blessings, his deeds, and his right to be considered a happy man.

There are several points which indicate that Xenophon has in mind the traditional conversation between Solon and Croesus, and that he intends to have his hero Cyrus fulfil the requirements for Solon's "happiest man." Solon, it will be remembered, gives (Herod. i. 30-32) first place to Tellus, the Athenian, because, while he was alive, his city was prosperous. So Cyrus, looking back, says (*Cyrop.* viii. 7. 7): τὴν πατρίδα πρόσθεν ιδιωτεύουσιν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ νῦν προτετιμημένην καταλείπω; and (§ 8) καταλείπω δὲ πατρίδα καὶ φίλους εὐδαιμονοῦντας. Again, Tellus was happy because he left children to survive him; so Cyrus (§ 8) καταλείπω μὲν ὑμᾶς, ὦ παῖδες, ζῶντας οὗσπερ ἔδοσαν μοι οἱ θεοὶ γενέσθαι. Third, Solon cannot pronounce a man happy unless it should be his fortune to end his life well, *being in possession of all his good things*; so Cyrus says (§ 7): ὃν τ' ἐκτησάμην οὐδὲν οἶδα ὅτι οὐ διεσωσάμην. Fourth, Solon's happy man dies in peace; so does Cyrus (πάντας δεξιωσάμενος ἐνκαλύψατο καὶ οὕτως ἐτελεύτησεν [§ 28]). The parallelism in the above is almost too close to indicate that Xenophon merely used the same tradition as Herodotus; direct use of Herodotus is probable. Note also the following. Herodotus (i. 32) makes Solon say of the "happiest man": εἰ δὲ πρὸς τούτοις ἔτι τελευτήσει τὸν βίον εὖ, οὗτος ἐκεῖνος τὸν σὺ ζητέεις ὄλβιος κεκληῖσθαι ἄξιός ἐστι. And so Xenophon has Cyrus close this part of his speech with the words: ὥστε πῶς οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ δίκαιως μακαρίζόμενος τὸν αἰὲ χρόνον μνήμης τυγχάνοιμι; (§ 9) and seems, by his tone of challenge in the question, by his emphatic ἐγώ, and by his δίκαιως, to be offering his hero Cyrus as the happy man whom Solon is seeking. Compare also Herod. i. 32: ἐν γὰρ τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ πολλὰ μὲν ἔστι ἰδεῖν τὰ μὴ τις ἐθέλει, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ παθεῖν with Xen. *Cyrop.* viii. 7. 7: τὸν μὲν παρελθόντα χρόνον ἔπραττον οὕτως ὥσπερ ἡνυχόμεν· φόβος δέ μοι συμπαρομαρτῶν μὴ τι ἐν τῷ ἐπίοντι χρόνῳ ἢ ἴδοιμι ἢ ἀκούσαιμι ἢ πάθοιμι χαλεπὸν, οὐκ εἶα. . . .

In *Cyrop.* viii. 6 Xenophon, counting up Persian institutions that can be ascribed to Cyrus, mentions (§ 17) the messenger service. His knowledge of this is not first-hand, for he begins with *κατεμάθομεν*, and in § 18 he twice refers to other authorities. That Herodotus is one of these authorities seems probable. Compare

Cyrop. viii. 6. 17: ἐποίησατο ἱππῶνας τοσοῦτον διαλείποντας καὶ ἵππους ἐν αὐτοῖς κατέστησε καὶ τοὺς ἐπιμελομένους τούτων, καὶ ἄνδρα ἐφ' ἐκάστῳ τῶν τόπων ἔταξε, with Herod. viii. 98: τοσοῦτοι ἵπποι τε καὶ ἄνδρες διεστᾶσι, κατὰ ἡμερησίην ὁδὸν ἐκάστην ἵππος τε καὶ ἀνὴρ τεταγμένος. Compare *Cyrop.* viii. 6. 17: τὸν ἐπιτήδειον παραδέχεσθαι τὰ φερόμενα γράμματα καὶ παραδιδόναι, with Herod. viii. 98: ὁ δραμὼν παραδιδοῖ τὰ ἐντεταλμένα [and they] διεξέρχεται παραδιδόμενα. Compare *Cyrop.* viii. 6. 18: ἔστι δ' ὅτε οὐδὲ τὰς νύκτας φασὶν ἴστασθαι ταύτην τὴν πορείαν, with Herod. viii. 98: τοὺς [the messengers] οὔτε νίφετός, ... οὐ νύξ ἔργει μὴ οὐ κατανύσαι τὸν δρόμον. In his next statement Xenophon refers to someone else than Herodotus; his words are: φασί τινες θᾶπτον τῶν γεράνων ταύτην τὴν πορείαν ἀνύτειν. Herodotus does not mention cranes; his words are: τούτων δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἔστι οὐδὲν ὅτι θᾶσσαν παραγίνεται θνητὸν ἐόν. But the fact that Xenophon here says φασί τινες, whereas above he has simply said φασι, indicates that he has in mind here a different authority from the one he had above—another reason for believing that the similarities noted are not accidental.

In the long, fanciful tale of King Rhampsinitus and the robber we are told by Herodotus (ii. 121) how the king's daughter seizes the robber by the arm only to find after a moment that she is holding a detachable arm. This same fantastic idea occurs in the *Cyrop.* (vii. 3. 8), not as a part of a wild legend, but in the otherwise excellent death-scene of Panthea and Abradatas, where it gives the impression of an incongruous element forced into the narrative.

That Xenophon, in describing the capture of Babylon by Cyrus (*Cyrop.* vii. 5), is using the same tradition as Herodotus (i. 190 ff.) is clear, for the two accounts agree in their principal features. But note also the following. Herodotus, strangely enough, fails to mention the time of day when the attack was made; Xenophon, as if to supply the omission, calls the reader's attention to the fact that it was at night, five times (§§ 15 bis; 16, 21, 25). But Xenophon's account lacks coherency. It represents Cyrus as considering ways of taking the city, and then deciding that it can be done only by siege. Hereupon he begins his elaborate works. But

unexpectedly we are told (§ 12): ὑπετίθει τούτου ἕνεκα ὅπως ὅτι μάλιστα εἰκοίκοι πολιορκήσιν παρασκευαζομένην. Does Xenophon mean to say that there had been no intention of besieging at all? If so, why has he not said so? If, on the other hand, he wishes to indicate a change of plan, why is not that change recorded? Without knowing how it happens, the reader finds himself transferred from one plan to the other. In Herodotus, all is clear: after Cyrus has besieged for a long time, he becomes perplexed; then he devises and carries out the plan of using the channel of the river. Xenophon's confusion of the two plans may be due to his use of Herodotus; at first he expands the few words of Herodotus about the siege, and then unconsciously gets into the description of the other plan, here too expanding the brief statements of Herodotus, but failing to connect the two as he should.

In *Cyrop.* viii. 2. 10-12 Xenophon explains who the king's "eyes" and "ears" are, and throughout the passage he seems to be anxious to emphasize the fact that there are many such; e.g., πολλοὺς ἐποίησεν ἀνθρώπους διοπτεύειν; and πολλοὶ ἐνομίσθησαν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ πολλὰ ὦτα; and εἰ δέ τις οἶεται ἓνα αἰρετὸν εἶναι ὀφθαλμὸν βασιλεῖ, οὐκ ὀρθῶς οἶεται; and οὕτω δὴ πολλὰ ὦτα, πολλοὶ ὀφθαλμοί. Evidently someone has caused the impression that there is but one king's eye. The τις above, who οἶεται ἓνα αἰρετὸν εἶναι ὀφθαλμὸν βασιλεῖ, may be Herodotus, for he says (i. 114) that when Cyrus had been chosen king by his playmates, he αὐτῶν διέταξε τοὺς μὲν οἰκίας οἰκοδομέειν, τοὺς δὲ δορυφόρους εἶναι, τὸν δὲ κοῦ τινα αὐτῶν ὀφθαλμὸν βασιλέως εἶναι.

Xenophon sometimes expresses an idea in a manner similar to that of Herodotus. Compare only two examples: Xen. *Anab.* i. 7. 9: εἵπερ γε Δαρείου καὶ Παρυσάτιδος ἐστὶ παῖς, ἐμὸς δὲ ἀδελφός, οὐκ ἀμαχεῖ ταῦτ' ἐγὼ λήψομαι, with Herod. vii. 11: μὴ γὰρ εἶην ἐκ Δαρείου τοῦ Ἑστιάσπεος γεγονώς, μὴ τιμωρησάμενος Ἀθηναίους. Also Xen. *Anab.* iii. 2. 25: δέδοικα μὴ, ἂν ἅπαξ μάθωμεν ἄργοι ζῆν καὶ ἐν ἀφθόνοις βιοτεύειν, ... ἐπιλαθώμεθα τῆς οἰκαδε ὁδοῦ, with Herod. i. 71: γευσάμενοι γὰρ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀγαθῶν περιέξονται οὐδὲ ἀπωστοὶ ἔσονται. Possibly Xen. *Symp.* iv. 38: ἐν

τῆ οἰκίᾳ πάνυ μὲν ἁλεεινοὶ χιτῶνες οἱ τοίχοί μοι δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, is due to Herod. vii. 139: εἰ καὶ πολλοὶ τειχέων κιθῶνες ἦσαν.

That Xenophon's style in general reveals the influence of Herodotus is evident. This was recognized even by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who says (*Ep. ad Romp.* 4): Ξενοφῶν Ἡροδότου δηλωτῆς ἐγένετο κατ' ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς χαρακτῆρας τὸν τε πραγματικὸν καὶ τὸν λεκτικόν.

In conclusion: When we consider the strong *prima facie* probability that Xenophon knew the work of Herodotus; when we recall that Xenophon's failure to mention or to refer to Herodotus is in keeping with his treatment of other writers whom he is known to have read, e.g., Thucydides; when we realize that Xenophon, on account of the nature of his writings, made little use of the works of others, except the poets, and hence that few traces of Herodotus or of any other writer are likely to be found; when we consider that Xenophon has read Ctesias, the one writer, besides Herodotus, to whom he would be likely to turn for Persian affairs; and when, finally, we add to this the parallels given above, and the passages which, unsatisfactory in themselves, become clear and full of meaning when viewed in the light of Herodotus—it seems not too bold to say that Xenophon knew the *History* of Herodotus.